

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as shown below, in which deleted terms are indicated with strikethrough and/or double brackets, and added terms are indicated with underscoring. The following list of claims replaces all previous versions, and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently amended) An automobile door checker connected between a body and a door of an automobile, the door checker comprising:

a case secured to one of the body and the door;

a check plate that runs movably through the case and the check plate is linked to the other of the body and the door;

a shoe holder that is held by the case and the shoe holder is able to move ~~toward~~ towards and away from the check plate;

a shoe that is held by disposed in the shoe holder ~~and~~ the shoe comprising a first segment having a high frictional surface and a second segment having a low frictional surface for sliding slides on the check plate accompanying relative movement between the case and the check plate; and

a check spring that resiliently urges the shoe holder toward the check plate within the case in order to press the shoe against the check plate;

wherein the shoe is axially supported in the shoe holder so that the shoe can swing from a neutral position to forward and backward swing limits along the lengthwise direction of the check plate;

wherein a return-to-neutral means for exhibiting a return force that makes the shoe return to the neutral position is connected to the shoe; and

wherein the contact area between the shoe and the check plate is arranged so that the frictional force in the contact area becomes [[the]] smallest when the shoe reaches the shoe swing limits.

2. (Currently amended) ~~The automobile door checker according to Claim 1,~~ An automobile door checker connected between a body and a door of an automobile, the door checker comprising:

a case secured to one of the body and the door;

a check plate that runs movably through the case and the check plate is linked to the other of the body and the door;

a shoe holder that is held by the case and the shoe holder is able to move towards and away from the check plate;

a shoe that is disposed in the shoe holder and the shoe slides on the check plate accompanying relative movement between the case and the check plate; and

a check spring that resiliently urges the shoe holder toward the check plate within the case in order to press the shoe against the check plate;

wherein the shoe is axially supported in the shoe holder so that the shoe can swing from a neutral position to forward and backward swing limits along the lengthwise direction of the check plate;

wherein a return-to-neutral means for exhibiting a return force that makes the shoe return to the neutral position is connected to the shoe; and

wherein the return-to-neutral means comprises a recess formed in the shoe, an engagement member that engages with the recess, and a return spring for urging the engagement

member in a direction in which the engagement member engages with the recess, the recess having an inclined face such that [[,]] accompanying swinging of the shoe from the neutral position toward the swing limits [[,]] pushes the engagement member upward in order to generate the return force by increasing the repulsive force of the return spring; and

wherein the contact area between the shoe and the check plate is arranged so that the frictional force in the contact area becomes smallest when the shoe reaches the shoe swing limits.

3. (New) The automobile door checker of claim 1, wherein the first segment includes a surface formed by embedding material having a high frictional coefficient.

4. (New) The automobile door checker of claim 1, wherein the second segment includes a surface formed by embedding a material having a low frictional material coefficient.

5. (New) The automobile door checker of claim 1, wherein the return-to-neutral means comprises a recess formed in the shoe; an engagement member that engages with the recess; and a return spring for urging the engagement member in a direction in which the engagement member engages with the recess, the recess having an inclined face such that accompanying swinging of the shoe from the neutral position towards the swing limits pushes the engagement member upward in order to generate the return force by increasing the repulsive force of the return spring.

6. (New) The automobile door checker according to claim 1, wherein the return-to-neutral means comprises a recess formed in the shoe; an engagement member that engages with the

recess; and a return spring for urging the engagement member in a direction in which the engagement member engages with the recess, the recess having an inclined face such that accompanying swinging of the shoe from the neutral position toward the swing limits pushes the engagement member upward in order to generate the return force by increasing the repulsive force of the return spring.

7. (New) An automobile door checker connected between a body and a door of an automobile, the door checker comprising:

a case secured to one of the body and the door; and

a check plate operatively situated in a center of the case dividing the case into two halves and the check plate is linked to the other of the body and the door;

wherein each said half of the case comprises:

a shoe holder that is held by the case and the shoe holder is able to move towards and away from the check plate;

a shoe that is held by the shoe holder and the shoe slides on the check plate accompanying relative movement between the case and the check plate; and

a check spring that resiliently urges the shoe holder toward the check plate within the case in order to press the shoe against the check plate;

wherein the shoe is axially supported in the shoe holder so that the shoe can swing from a neutral position to forward and backward swing limits along the lengthwise direction of the check plate;

wherein a return-to-neutral means for exhibiting a return force that makes the shoe return to the neutral position is connected to the shoe; and

wherein the contact area between the shoe and the check plate is arranged so that the frictional force in the contact area becomes the smallest when the shoe reaches the shoe swing limits.

8. (New) The automobile door checker of claim 7, wherein the return-to-neutral means comprises a recess formed in the shoe; an engagement member that engages with the recess; and a return spring for urging the engagement member in a direction in which the engagement member engages with the recess, the recess having an inclined face such that accompanying swinging of the shoe from the neutral position towards the swing limits pushes the engagement member upward in order to generate the return force by increasing the repulsive force of the return spring.